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NEW YORK TIMES
23 November 1985

Allies Said to Spy Frequently on Each Other

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 22 — If an American Navy analyst is convicted of spying for Israel, it will be the latest of many examples of allied intelligence services' spying on each other.

Former intelligence officers say, however, that the case of the Navy analyst, Jonathan Jay Pollard, is unusual because the charges involve the use of a clandestine agent rather than other methods of gathering information.

Governments are reluctant to discuss their intelligence efforts in allied countries, and they often adopt the position, as Israel did today, that such efforts violate official policy. But American officials say the Central Intelligence Agency, like its counterparts abroad, gathers sensitive information about all of the world's strategically significant countries.

Keeping Abreast of Shifts

Indeed, some of the severest criticism of the C.I.A. in recent years arose from the failure to predict the fall of the Shah of Iran, one of America's closest allies in the Middle East.

Jeffrey T. Richelson, a professor at American University who specializes in intelligence matters, said that spying on allies was motivated by several factors, including the need to avoid being surprised by sudden shifts in policy. In 1956, for example, he said, the United States monitored Britain's coded communications to keep informed about the progress of their Suez Canal operation.

"One good reason to do it is that your allies can get you into more trouble than your enemies," Mr. Richelson said. "Even with our allies there are conflicting interests. There are things, for example, we don't want to see the Israelis do or things we don't want them to have. Whenever there's any sort of conflict of interests there's a motive for spying or intelligence."

On a number of occasions, American intelligence agencies, particularly the National Security Agency, have been accused of monitoring the electronic conversations of allies. In 1954, for instance, an N.S.A. employee was ar-

rested on charges of spying for the Dutch Government. Among other things, he told the Dutch that the agency itself was listening to Dutch diplomatic transmissions.

More recently, in 1979, South Africa expelled three employees of the American Embassy in Pretoria who had fitted the American Ambassador's plane with cameras to photograph military installations.

Americans Asked to Leave Spain

Earlier this year, in February, the Spanish Government asked two American diplomats to leave the country under suspicion of espionage.

Israel has been the focus of charges of gathering secret information in the United States for a number of years. In 1978, Michael Saba, an official of the National Association of Arab-Americans, told the Justice Department that he had overheard a Congressional aide offering to supply Israeli officials with a classified document.

The aide, Stephen Bryen, denied the charge and was cleared by the Justice Department. He is now a senior Pentagon official.

A 1979 C.I.A. study that was captured and made public by Iranians who seized the American Embassy in Tehran contended that Israeli intelligence services try to learn about secret American Government decisions on Israel and the Middle East.

The study said that two of the most important goals of Israeli intelligence are: "collection of information on secret U.S. policy or decisions, if any concerning Israel" and "collection of scientific intelligence in the U.S. and other developed countries."

In the document, the C.I.A. said that some of the data came from "covert assets of the Central Intelligence Agency," an allusion that suggests that the United States may have done some intelligence gathering to prepare the report.

Harold Saunders, the Carter Administration's Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, said today that United States policy has barred spying against Israel. Mr. Saunders said he

was particularly surprised by the charge that the Israelis had chosen to use an American agent.

"The Israelis have such wide access to American society, and contacts in all part and all levels of the United States Government," he said. "I'm surprised they would have to engage in clandestine activity."

Mr. Saba, now with the Attiyeh Foundation in Washington, said that the United States Government withholds from the Israelis a large amount of information on the military capabilities of Arab countries. This would include, he said, American reports on the location of radar stations in countries like Jordan.